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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 000744

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT YUDHOYONO CONSOLIDATES SUPPORT

REF: JAKARTA 724 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On April 26, President Yudhoyono officially accepted the nomination of his party, Partai Demokrat (PD), to seek a second-term. Since the April 9 parliamentary election, Yudhoyono and PD have been consolidating support from smaller parties. Should all this support pan out, the PD coalition would be in excellent position heading into the July presidential election. Yudhoyono also announced that he was carefully weighing his options for the vice-presidential slot, assuring his supporters that he will name his running mate by May 10. END SUMMARY.

PARTAI DEMOKRAT ENDORSES PRESIDENT YUDHOYONO

¶2. (U) In a pro forma move, PD officially chose President Yudhoyono as its candidate to run for a second term as president in an April 26 Leaders Meeting held in Jakarta. PD members also gave Yudhoyono the mandate to choose his running mate (see more below). In accepting his party's nomination for the July election, Yudhoyono stated that he "would strive to fulfill the trust and continue to work to improve the situation of the Indonesian people."

CONSOLIDATING SUPPORT FROM SMALLER PARTIES

¶3. (SBU) Since the April 9 parliamentary election, President Yudhoyono and PD have been consolidating support. Yudhoyono has secured the support of 14 minor parties, comprising a combined 12.5 percent of the vote in the recent parliamentary elections (this is in addition to the over 20 percent of support that PD won in the election while finishing first in the race).

¶4. (SBU) The National Mandate Party (PAN) and Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) both announced over the weekend that they want to team up with PD and offered Yudhoyono a list of VP candidates from their respective parties from which he is free to choose. This support, plus that of the National Awakening Party (PKB), which has already aligned with PD, would raise Yudhoyono's support to almost 53 percent of all voters in the recent parliamentary election, an extremely impressive figure. Yudhoyono has yet to formalize the coalition with PKS and PAN, although he is expected to do so soon.

YUDHOYONO TO CONSIDER VP SLOT

¶5. (C) Indonesia is abuzz with rumors and reports regarding who Yudhoyono might choose as his running mate. In public comments, Yudhoyono said his running mate must "possess integrity, capability, loyalty, public support, and the ability to strengthen his ruling coalition." PD leaders said

they are considering 19 VP candidates. Yudhoyono said he would announce his running mate before the May 10 deadline to register candidates for the presidential election.

16. (C) As reviewed in reftels, Yudhoyono is said to be seriously considering as running mate current State Secretary and former PAN Chair Hatta Rajasa, a competent minister who Yudhoyono trusts. Another contender is Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs and Finance Sri Mulyani Indrawati, a technocrat with no real party affiliation who has earned respect for helping Indonesia to weather the financial crisis and for clamping down on corruption. Also in the running is Golkar's Akbar Tanjung, who is leading a breakaway effort from VP Jusuf Kalla's Golkar faction--which is currently seeking to form an opposition coalition. Hidayat Nur Wahid of PKS is also under consideration but is a long shot. (Note: Per reftels, Yudhoyono and PD have basically ruled out sharing the ticket again with Jusuf Kalla, the current VP and chair of the Golkar party.)

HUME